

CHILD STUDY

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CHILD STUDY

THE FAMILY

The Mother's Basic Problem

By ETHEL PUFFER HOWES

The Adolescent in the Family

By LETA S. HOLLINGWORTH

What Can We Expect of the Family Today?

By ERNEST R. GROVES



Published by

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No. 1

The Mother's Basic Problem

By Ethel Puffer Howes*

AN important part of the mother's problem is perhaps symbolized in a colloquy between myself and my three-year-old son. Dressing him one day, I lapsed into a customary murmur of "darling little lamb—". Whereupon, "I'm not a lamb," he shot back. "Don't call me *lamb*! Call me tiger!"

Yes, that is what the child needs first of all: to be seen for what he *is*, to be understood, to be let to play his own role. But to bring successfully to pass the free development of the child's individuality, many things must work together for good through them that love him.

What mothers must provide—beyond milk, orange-juice, spinach, cod-liver oil, and right habits of feeding, bathing and behaving—is a firm foundation for the child's universe. Affection, serenity, order, continuity, justice, sympathy, and freedom must flow from her. Perhaps the greatest of these is serenity.

How can the mother diffuse serenity unless she has achieved it? If there is today anyone less sure of her own vital needs and her own central aims than the average mother, I don't know the creature. Why is this? From a thirty years' experience with all types of women, I should say it is because of the conflict between the traditional, invariable, and therefore generic demands of wifehood and motherhood, and those other demands, first frankly recognized in the last generation, perhaps, arising from the specific individual person that she is.

This is not at all to my mind a matter of the so-called "career" or "self-expression" in the accepted sense. Perhaps I might put it in this way: in general, all fathers have to be providers, and all mothers have to be nurturers. But fathers, by

hypothesis, do their providing each in his own particular way, according to his own talents and special interests. Mothers do their nurturing according to the needs of their offspring, not each with reference to her own talents or interests.

If that means inhibition for every mother, how much more for the choicer intelligences, who press on during a fearless, unconscious youth to the development of the talent and the work they love, only to find that with marriage and motherhood the intrinsic worth of their individual interest seems to have vanished—at least from everyone's mind but their own! Talk of suppressed desires! It's suppressed powers that I believe is at the root of much restlessness and instability among our women today and I have found psychiatrists to agree with me!

The fact is, society has now no frame for the mother who needs also to be a person. It puts a premium on the specialization of the male, at the same time stressing the generic quality of the female not only to the extent rendered necessary by the conditions of child-nurture, but to an extreme extent of waste and disparagement of the woman's powers as an individual. The result is that women's higher education, so far as it is specialized, has a certain unreality, through its quick fading out in the present normal life of marriage and motherhood.

It is true that for women of an executive type, interested in civic matters, present-day life offers many and varied, if scattered, opportunities. But for those whose interests are not primarily those of execution, there is little opportunity for any intrinsically valuable activity. The purely cultural interests of reading, concerts, club life, etc., are passive, aesthetic in character. They do not

*From an address delivered at the Parenthood Conference, Child Study Association, Oct. 26, 1925.

fill the need. What chance of internal serenity for those who, of active mind or intellectual endowment, are increasingly conscious of a certain intellectual frustration, even in the happiest family conditions?

It is to meet this situation, and to solve this problem of the educated, intelligent woman, ever more clearly presenting itself with the increase in the numbers of our married alumnae, that Smith College has recently undertaken a new plan of research. This research is to answer the question: How can I combine my natural life of the affections with the intensive intellectual or professional activity which is half my life, and combine it in an integral way? By integral I mean accepted, planned for from the beginning of education, provided for by the current social arrangements, acknowledged as also of intrinsic worth.

The way to the answer to that question will lie in the working out of household and social rearrangements such as can be applicable to all young people just beginning a modest family life, so that the intellectual (or artistic, etc.), life can actually be lived, without interference with the personal life. And secondly, through the exploration and modification of the various professions and allied occupations, so that activity of professional (not amateur) quality, but free-lance as to time and place, may be allowed, recognized, or even paid for. This will have to come through study of the records, first, of individuals—how they have adjusted their successes and failures (for it's from failures you learn most; secondly, from study of the previous social experiments in reorganization (which if failures are also most interesting) in the way of methods of release. Thirdly, from exploration, discovery, invention and experiment in new ways to live.

Our first studies will be concerned with cooperative nurseries and nursery schools, with cooperative food-supply, laundries and personal service organizations, because these seem first to offer

the necessary qualities of automatic, inexpensive, superior types of release for the thoughtful mother from her present bondage, not to the essentials of loving child-nurture, but to the non-essentials of the house as factory.

What most children need today is to have the mother sincerely interested in something worthy apart from them. We can hardly measure, I believe, what sensitive-natured children suffer from the intense, sustained concentration upon them of the conscientious, otherwise mentally unoccupied mother. They need letting alone. They need shade.

"You can't be happy when you're being loved all the time," says Martin, Christopher Morley's symbol of childhood, in "Thunder on the Left."

I once knew a young student with a most devoted mother. "I can't work," he said once, "for I know she's always sitting out there beyond my door *thinking about me*."

Children are like wild animals—you've got to pretend not to be looking at them if they are to be really comfortable or free. And it's in that sense of freedom to think their own long, long thoughts of youth that young things grow and blossom. For the mother to be happily occupied in her own concerns, happily unaware of her child's, but *ready*—is the mental breath of life for him.

For the older children and youth, more truly now than ever before, a necessity of guidance is respect and admiration for the parents' own powers, achievement and standing. Youth, above all, rebellious youth, needs to hero-worship. I believe that much of the break-up of the family and family influence we hear of today as the source of all our troubles could be avoided if the parents, and beyond all the mother, were poised in herself, in that inner harmony of all her powers which gives serenity and gains respect and following.

Three Study Groups Start Special Work at Headquarters

Contemporary psychology, with special reference to the adult-child relationship, will be studied in a discussion group led by Dr. Everett Dean Martin, Director of the People's Institute. This group is to meet weekly.

Another special group, led by Dr. Louise Brink, psychiatrist, will study the mental hygiene of the child: the pre-natal life, the experience of birth, and the child's

relation to his parents and other members of the family.

An evening group for fathers and mothers, led by Dr. Benjamin C. Gruenberg, will aim to give the basis of sex knowledge that a parent needs in order to meet the problems which arise in the growth of his children.

Details as to time and place of meeting for these groups can be secured by writing to the Child Study Association, 54 West 74th Street, New York City.

The Adolescent in the Family

Growing up makes necessary the putting away of childish things

By Leta S. Hollingworth *

THERE is a psychological urge which develops in every normal human being in the years between twelve and twenty to get away from family supervision and to become an independent person. We might call this process psychological weaning. Like the physical weaning from infantile methods of taking food, it may be attended by emotional outbursts, which are likely to come upon people whenever habits have to be broken. In both kinds of weaning, we have a situation in which habits appropriate to a given stage of development come into conflict with the urges growing out of further development of the organism. Also in both kinds of weaning, either the physical or the mental, at least two separate sets of habits must be superseded, the habits of the parent and the habits of the offspring. In mental weaning, indeed, more than two sets may be involved. There are the habits of the child, of the mother, of the father, and often of older brothers and sisters, or even of aunts and uncles, all having the possibility of acting in opposition to the new attitudes which must come when childish things are to be put away.

The process of getting away from the family thus stands double, triple, and even quadruple chances of being painfully and imperfectly carried out. The technique of weaning, and especially of mental weaning, deserves study by all parents who desire the welfare of their children instead of their own emotional indulgence.

By getting away from the family I do not mean the mere circumstance of leaving the parental roof, although in most cases that is automatically involved. There are persons who have fully accomplished their psychological weaning who continue to reside in the parental house; and, on the other hand, there are those who live far removed from it in space who have never freed their minds from childish dependence upon parents or from childish obedience to them, who are always expecting the world at large to protect them as parents protected them in the home.

Also, by emancipation from the parents, I do not mean disorderly conduct, defiance of authority, or insolence. Some of the most unweaned of adolescents are the most insolent, disorderly, and troublesome. They behave like infants indeed,

infants weighing more than a hundred pounds, and grown to be five or six feet tall. Such adolescents, however insubordinate in conduct, are not emotionally emancipated in the sense in which we are using the word. On the contrary, they are usually bound to the parental resources in all essential respects. They are not on the way to the kind of maturity of which we are speaking here.

By getting away from the family, I mean a detachment from it in the emotional life to such an extent at least that there shall remain no crippling bondage to interfere with legitimate personal choice and achievement of what counts most for adult happiness—vocation, mating, and attitude toward life. The individual, by the time he or she is twenty, must have left home in his feeling. He must have broken the habits of obedience, dependence, protectedness and the like which are fostered by the immaturity of childhood and be ready to face the world as an independent entity.

It is evident that as men have become more and more civilized, the problems of adolescent adjustment have become more and more complicated. In primitive life, there was no question of the mother's apron strings, not only because apron strings had not at that time been invented, but because release from the family situation was then accomplished by formal public action. Then, as now, the mothers wept and other relatives also, but the primitive community required that hunters and fighters begin their life-work early. These public needs grew gradually less pressing as men gained more and more control over the earth. Wealth and security accumulated, and the ancient tribal ceremonies of puberty fell into the disuse which we witness. We now leave it to the adolescent to disconnect himself or herself from emotional and economic dependence upon the family.

While the putting away of childish things is necessary for carrying into effect normal life plans, it is nearly always somewhat painful, and many persons never accomplish it at all. They then remain homesick all their lives. The homesick individual is ill of a psychological illness which incapacitates for the activities of adult life.

One of the facts earliest appreciated in the mod-

* From an address delivered at the Parenthood Conference, Child Study Association, Oct. 26, 1925.

ern study of ineffectual personality was that the incapacity for adjustment is often connected with abnormal persistence of attachment to the family situation. Habits of invariable yielding to parental domination, or habits of being tenderly sustained and protected without facing competitive work, have never been broken.

Now, it will be asked, how can parents work toward the normal, healthy mental weaning of their children? What techniques may they employ? It is hard for parents to lead up to the right outcome in this matter, unless they keep themselves actively conscious of its imminence and importance; unless they have foresight, insight, and self-control.

One of these requirements, insight, can come from the study of the psychology of childhood and adolescence. The growing of a child is so gradual, and habits of acting toward a child become so firmly fixed, that the parent is liable to fall victim to his own habits unless he or she revise them constantly in the light of developmental psychology. The clutch of habit is nowhere more powerful than in the parent-child relationship. Parents begin when the child is born to help or to hinder normal adolescent emancipation from them, by the way they treat the child in revising both his and their habits as development progresses.

The foundations of a successful adolescence must be laid in childhood. Will the child withstand homesickness when he is eighteen? It depends on the degree to which parents have fostered self-reliance and progressive attitudes in him from early childhood. It depends on whether the parents have acted as though the child belonged to them, or have acted as though he belonged to himself and to his generation.

One may ask, But how can a child of three or four years be self-reliant? How can a six-year-old depend upon himself? Consider a few examples from real life. A boy of three and a half years is still nursing from a bottle because his parents say it was harder for him to learn to drink from a cup. Another is unable to walk along the street without holding on to some one's hand. Here is a child of six years unable to sleep in a bed by himself. There is one of five years yelling and falling into a tantrum if his mother goes out and leaves him at home. His mother always slips out a side door secretly on the rare occasions when she leaves him, to avoid these scenes. She never faces the situation with him.

All these young children seem to the psychol-

ogist well launched before school age on the way to difficult adolescence. The mental histories of homesick adolescents and adults are replete with similar incidents. The seven-year-old of normal intelligence who cannot dress himself, who permits himself to be fed by his nurse at table, who cannot go to sleep alone at night is no doubt well on the way toward chronic homesickness.

A young man was referred for psychological examination at the age of nineteen years, because his education was being seriously interfered with by chronic homesickness. His school history was as follows:

At the usual age he started in elementary school in the small town where his parents lived. He did well there and was graduated in due course. Then, in accordance with the family tradition, at the age of fourteen he was sent away by the father to a New England preparatory school. He remained there for two weeks, during which time he wept much, could not study, and begged to be sent home. His mother insisted on bringing him back, and he attended the public high school in the home town until he was graduated from it.

During all this time there was a difference of opinion between the parents, the father believing that the boy should be obliged to stay at the preparatory school away from home.

After graduation from high school, the problem again arose. There was no college in the home town, fortunately. The boy, then aged eighteen, was sent to an Eastern college. Here he was miserable, made no friends, lost ten pounds, could not study, occupied himself in trying to conceal his weeping, and wrote home that the food at the college was terrible, that his digestion was being ruined, and finally that his heart was becoming weak.

He developed physical complaints rapidly, and at last before the Christmas holidays had to be sent home. There his mother received him with satisfaction, coddled him, waited upon him, suggested that he might not be physically able to endure college education. The family physician, however, gave him a clean bill of health in all respects, so the father determined to try another college, compromising this time by selecting one near enough home so that the boy could visit frequently. Here, too, all sorts of difficulties developed. The boys in the dormitories were coarse and rude. The instructors were dry and uninteresting. A very bad cough had come on.

(Continued on page 13)

What Can We Expect of the Family Today?

By Ernest R. Groves*

SENTIMENT likes to think of the family as something that does not change, and so we find, whenever anybody considers home problems from the point of view of narrow personal experience, the temptation to think of the family in a static sense is always present. Of course, the reason is that we are always looking backward when we try to interpret our own family experience, particularly that part of our experience that happened to us in our childhood.

The facts of life care not for our attitude. The family never remains for any length of time the same. It is forever changing. It has been one of the most sensitive of our institutions. It is particularly sensitive at present, and is changing probably as rapidly as any part of our life. It can never be held in even its present form, so far as its surface functions are concerned, though we try desperately to anchor it to something that appeals to us as particularly wholesome. It is played upon constantly by the other experiences of life and lives by its ability to adjust itself to those changing circumstances.

We at present are in the midst of all the difficulties that result from a changing family life, and some people are discouraged, some are almost hopeless, and some are so foolish as to try to force the family back to where it once was. Whether we like it or not, the family emerges from any attempt on the part of society or organization to hold it in its present standing or its past functioning, and the only thing left is for thoughtfulness to try to adjust the family not only to the present needs but also as far as possible to the tasks of the future.

There is one thing we have to grant at once, when we try to think of the family from this viewpoint. Never in the future can the family have so much functioning as it has had in the immediate past. In primitive society there have been times when it has not functioned so very greatly, but in our childhood, and particularly the childhood of our parents, it had almost a monopoly of certain kinds of social experiences that are being rapidly taken from it. It remains for us, therefore, to discover what the family can do, and do wisely, in the present.

We must not force the family to do what it can not well do, but we find, when we study its possi-

bilities, that there never was a time when it could function to such great social advantage as at present, provided it has the strategy to see what it ought to do and the good sense not to try to do the things that are actually impossible for it. We shall have to look to the community more and more for things that once were family functions, but four fundamental functions of family life remain.

The first is the interpretation of experience. Every normal family provides for the child and also for the father and mother the best possible center for the bringing of the out-of-the-home experiences for reasonable and serious interpretation, and though we shall have to send our child out into life more and more to get things outside the home that once we gave him in the family life, we certainly still have that wonderful chance to have him come back to us with his experience and ask us, from time to time, how he can interpret it so as to get from it its largest meaning.

This will require on our part that we do not try merely to bring him our experience but that we are ourselves constantly alive to the changing circumstances, so that we can interpret to him his actual experience that he may feel that the home is the wisest place of understanding of all the various influences that come into his life.

In the second place, to some extent, to the largest extent so far as fundamentals are concerned, we have the power to direct the child. To be sure, this brings us risk. It does follow that at times we misdirect him, but if we are thoughtful and serious, if we keep close to child life, we at least can be safely trusted with advising him with regard to the major experiences of life. We can tell him where to go to find the experiences that we believe are best for him to get. We will not try to give them to him ourselves. We will realize that the expert can do better than we can do, but we can at least choose between experts. We will have to take the responsibility of direction or absolutely fail as parents.

It still remains to the family, also, to be the most important place for stimulation, because it has the child to a very large extent in the early years and also in the periods and under the opportunities that provide the most lasting stimulation.

(Continued on page 12)

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No. 1

The Changing Family

IN the professional world and in the industrial world changes have always been taken for granted. The home, however, has been put into a special category—whatever else might change, that must remain steadfast; whatever else we might experiment with, that must remain untouched. This attitude has impeded clear thinking on the subject for many years, for the home is an institution and a changing one.

One element in the change which the home and family are passing through is reflected in the thought of many psychologists and psychiatrists, who, in the interest of mental health, are recommending for individuals a certain amount of "getting away from the family."

Even the youngest child should not be with his mother twenty-four hours in the day, say those experienced in the training of the pre-school child. Not only does the mother need release from the daily routine, but the child can profit by the stimulation which comes from contact outside the home.

The school child has interests outside the family as a matter of course, and thus in the early years of the child's life the way is laid for the "mental weaning" of the adolescent, as Dr. Hollingworth has so aptly phrased it—a necessity if the girl or boy is to attain adulthood.

Though the home must concern itself chiefly with the nurturing and the training of the young, let us not lose sight of the fact that the father and the mother are themselves still developing as individuals. Disregard of this may cause injury to the personality of the adult, and also loss to the children, for the interests of all are closely bound up, one with another.

Instead of creating an impoverishment of family life, as some conservative thinkers seem to fear, this plastic organization may well lead to an actual enrichment of life and thought at home through the exchange of new experiences against a background of affection and in an atmosphere of understanding.

A Grandmother's Group

TWELVE grandmothers met on January 4th in New York City to consider their special place and function in connection with child training. At this meeting it was stated that mature people have a real function and can make a valuable contribution to the problems of the training of children. Their advice, however, can only be accepted by the younger people if they feel confident that the expressions of opinion of the more mature are based on scientific study of the principles involved in the training of the child living at the present day. Experience alone is not enough to provide a basis for statements which the younger generation will accept.

The lack of interest which present-day youth has shown regarding the opinions of elders has been due very largely to the fact that many of these elders had given very little thought and study to the more recent contributions considering the findings in psychology, hygiene, educational theories and other related topics.

Such a situation can be remedied if grandmothers will make it their business to be thoroughly well informed regarding these contributions so that they may intelligently discuss them with their children.

A program of study and discussion is being outlined to meet the needs of such a group, of which the grandmothers present at this meeting will form a nucleus.

C. P.

This Month's Contributors

Dr. Ethel Puffer Howes is Director of the Institute for the Co-ordination of Women's Interests, Smith College.

Dr. Leta S. Hollingworth is Assistant Professor of Education at Columbia University.

Dr. Ernest R. Groves is Professor of Social Science, at Boston University, and author of "Personality and Social Adjustment" and co-author of "Wholesome Childhood."

Can a Woman Reconcile Marriage and Motherhood with Individual Intellectual Activity?

*Discussion by a Child Study Group**

References: Anna Garlin Spencer, *The Family and Its Members*; Beatrice Hinkle, *The Re-creating of the Individual*; Lorine Pruette, *Women and Leisure*.

IN her book, "Women and Leisure, a Study of Social Waste," Lorine Pruette gives a summary of the answers to a questionnaire submitted to 347 girls. In connection with this she observes, "We found considerable vacillation of desires between home and career. In the day dreams described by the girls it becomes clear that the seeming vacillation is not due to inconsistency of desire but to the presence in the girls' lives of two elements, each demanding consideration."

"An apparent inconsistency of desires, or a fluctuation between desires, is compelled by the industrial and social conditions of the day. Harmony is possible for the woman who can find her career in the home. She carries on the old, strong current of the mores, the sources of which lie far back of the present age of machinery. But for many the restricted activities of the home prevent the possibility of finding complete expression. About fifty per cent. of the girls and women discussed in this study fall within this latter class. This percentage may or may not be typical of larger groups; it may or may not mean that fifty per cent. of all women feel the conflict of these dual desires. If it could be shown to be typical, it would offer within itself explanation for all the unrest and dissatisfaction now characteristic of the woman movement."

A general statement made by Miss Emma P. Hirth, director of the Bureau of Vocational Information, based on a series of case studies of one hundred women who have homes, husbands and children and who at the same time are carrying on paid work of some sort was quoted.

"The women who we consider have succeeded both in their work and in their family relationships have done so at terrific sacrifices. The extreme effort required to achieve eliminates all but women of the most extraordinary ability. In every case the mother was keenly aware of the magnitude of her undertaking and the great price that she was paying in order to carry on. The children were usually found to be of excep-

tional intelligence, but the study could not take in any extensive investigations in this field."

A third quotation was made from Dr. Beatrice Hinkle's "The Recreation of the Individual."

"In former periods the greatest responsibilities were demanded of woman with the least opportunity for herself as an individual. In modern times women are everywhere demanding and creating opportunities to work out for themselves their own needs as separate personalities. The desire for individual development is the dominant note of the crude formula, 'I must express myself.' This dominant need unfulfilled and consciously unrecognized by many women who yet suffer from it, gives rise to the common neuroses and to the neurotic and faulty personalities so manifest in the life of the present. Work in the world or useful activity is the final expression or fruit of psychological attainment and follows as a natural result when the individual development has proceeded far enough to release the energy bound up in the repressed and crude functions of personality."

In discussing the points of view thus presented, it was brought out that when we consider the two seemingly conflicting factors in the life of woman—the family and the career—we naturally place the family first and feel that any departure which would interfere with the accepted form must be excluded. But research has found that the family is a strictly pragmatic institution both in origin and development. Its form is determined largely by the culture status of the people in which the particular form obtains. It seems perfectly evident that the structure and function of the family have changed and may continue to change. Our objections to modifying it come from emotional causes rather than from a rational basis and we may as well recognize the fact that these objections will have little weight if through the interplay of social, economic and personal forces further changes become necessary.

The question was asked: "Is it really true that a woman must choose between having a career and being a wife and mother?"

* From the minutes of a demonstration group which met at the Institute of the Child Study Association on October 30, 1925.

It was felt that the thing at stake is not so much a career as the work that the woman wishes to do. Certainly the woman who does outside work and cares for the family at the same time faces a heavy task, but there is no reason to feel that ways cannot be found whereby a woman can express herself both biologically and as an individual. At present it is a problem which must be worked out.

The question was asked, "Does not work outside the home make the woman a more intelligent wife and mother?"

It was felt that in many ways it is to the advantage of the family to have the mother interested in work outside the home. The children become more independent and are much less likely to develop a mother fixation, the husband has more intellectual companionship.

Another question arose: "Is there a danger that the families of women who are engrossed in professional work will become victims to the mother's interest through constant discussion of these interests?"

It was pointed out that fathers engrossed in their work talk it morning, noon and night. Talking of these things in the home gives children a good idea of human behavior. Generally speaking, where there is a deep and real interest in anything, no matter what it is, children are bound to benefit by it. Both the mother and the father should remember, however, that children have a life of their own and should have a chance to talk about the things in which they are interested.

"When both husband and wife have excellent opportunities for work in different cities, which should sacrifice for the other?"

Anna Garlin Spencer points out that if the family is to have children the father must be depended on for continuous support. Therefore, unless there are exceptional considerations, the man's work should take precedence.

On the Way to a New School

ON Wednesday, December 16th, Professor Paul Dengler, director of the experimental work at the R. R. gymnasium in Vienna, Austria, addressed a conference held jointly by the United Parents Association and the Child Study Association in New York City. His talk was entitled: "On the Way to a New School."

Dr. Dengler told of a recent experiment in education conducted by him in one of the schools in Vienna. He spoke of the necessity of reform in the Austrian schools, as the old system was established on the basis of authority, its object being to teach loyalty to the Empire. The essential factor in this reform is therefore a greater degree of freedom and self-direction and this necessitates the freedom of the teacher and the school curriculum as well as that of the pupil.

Dr. Dengler's plan was to organize three communities out of each school grade: one of the parents, another of the teachers, and the third of the pupils. Each community elected an executive committee to prepare the rules and regulations governing it and to consider any problems that arose. The teachers at their community meetings worked out plans for a free curriculum, so that what Dr. Dengler called "concentrated instruction" might be given. This means the choice of a subject of general interest by the children and the introduction by the teacher of the other subjects in the curriculum in their relation to this chosen topic. The teachers cooperate in preparing the text books, which are given gratis to each child. The children's communities are based upon self-government and self-activity. Each child feels responsible for all the others.

The primary interest of all three communities is the freely-developing personality of the child. This expresses itself through the new conception of the responsibility of the individual for the group. One way of attaining this object is by converting the class-room into something that resembles a home, with an atmosphere of cooperation and mutual helpfulness.

The parents and teachers of Austria have come to the realization that they cannot change the nature of the child, but that they *can* learn what it is and help it to grow; and they are groping to build up a new school which will reflect life itself and equip its pupils to take their places in the new world that they will be called upon to face when their school days are over.

J. H. P.

The February number of "Child Study" will have for its subject, "The Pre-School Child."

Book Reviews

Unadjusted Boys and Girls

The Problem Child in School. By Mary B. Sayles. N. Y. Committee on Methods of Preventing Delinquency. 1925.

WRITTEN in narrative form and with a human touch, "The Problem Child in School" presents a series of cases representing a variety of types of boys and girls who were unadjusted to life for one reason or another.

The book is valuable from two points of view. First, the material is drawn from life, and second, the treatment of the material is constructive.

Because of these two facts it should be of interest even to parents of so-called "normal" children. Situations similar to those described might easily arise through the lack of insight or foresight of supposedly intelligent parents. If parents can be brought to see the far-reaching effects of certain types of parental behavior or attitudes which to them seem natural, their relations with their children might avoid the destructive character which they too often assume.

Throughout the book emphasis is laid on the important part which success plays in the development of a personality, and on the value of using sympathy and understanding rather than fear in the guidance of children.

It goes without saying that this book should be of special interest to teachers. At the close there is an article by Howard W. Nudd on "The Purpose and Scope of Visiting Teacher Work." A. D.

Child Training in Popular Terms

School and Home. By Angelo Patri. D. Appleton & Co. \$1.50.

THIS book, like its predecessors, "Child Training" and "Talks to Mothers," is composed of essays that have appeared individually in periodicals. Patri's cheery, simple style and abundance of illustrations are evident throughout.

From a wealth of experience he selects cases that describe in a graphic way the points he wishes to make. Every one is interested in cases—in the specific rather than the general—and the great popular appeal of Angelo Patri's philosophy of child training may be partly attributed to this.

The essays are on all phases of child-training, but, as the name of the book implies, they deal specifically with the faults of child-training that show up in the school, and the failure of the school to minister to the individual needs of the child. Mr. Patri pleads for sympathy and understanding, for freedom of the child and self-restraint of the parent.

"School and Home" is simple—not especially new or original, but very wise and appealing. C. F. B.

Suggested Reading in Recent Magazines

"*Personality Deviations and Their Relation to the Home.*" By Sybil Foster. Mental Hygiene, October, 1925.

Pointing out the power of environment in making or marring the personality. Illustrated by case studies.

"*The Chaos of Modern Marriage.*" By Beatrice M. Hinkle, M.D. Harper's Magazine, December, 1925.

A study of the changing social economic factors leading to present conditions of American marriage, with a key toward a satisfactory individual and social application. B.G.

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What Can We Expect of the Family Today?

(Continued from page 7)

Then, last of all, the child, being human, needs fellowship. Here also there is risk, but we all grant it is a human need, that a child feels poverty-stricken in his childhood, and in his adult life feels as if he had been robbed of an essential experience if fellowship be entirely denied him. This fellowship provides for the child much more than the kind of police-power control that thoughtless persons want the family to undertake so seriously. It provides the beginning of loyalty, which is always a greater virtue than obedience and makes the child fitted to take his own place and govern himself increasingly as his knowledge increases.

And so the family in the present and in the future can be safely trusted with interpreting a large part of the experiences of life; with the directing of child life; with the giving of stimulation; and particularly with bestowing upon the child the necessary fellowship.

Speaker's Bureau Active During January

LECTURERS from the Child Study Association have been much in demand this season. Engagements in New York City are met almost daily, while outside the city during January the following talks are scheduled:

On January 8th Mrs. Sidonie M. Gruenberg will speak before the Montclair Women's Club on "Freedom and Discipline in the Home." Mrs. Violet A. Jersawit will speak on January 12th, at Elizabeth, N. J., while on January 18th Mrs. Gruenberg will speak at Moorestown, N. J., on "Problems of Discipline."

Among the local engagements for January are an address on January 9th before the Montessori Alumnae Association and a lecture on January 10th at Union Theological Seminary. Both of these will be given by Mrs. Gruenberg.

On February 5th the Child Study Association will be represented at the Pennsylvania Conference on Social Welfare at Pittsburgh. Mrs. Gruenberg will speak on "The Challenge of Parenthood." The program of the Conference is to be keyed on the subject of the family.

LECTURES AND CONFERENCES IN NEW YORK

DURING JANUARY, 1926

Wednesday, January 13, 3:45 P. M.—Conference

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*Wednesday, January 20, at 8:30 P. M.—
Evening Lecture*

The Adolescent in Modern Society

DR. MAURICE A. BIGELOW

Author of "Sex Education" and editor of the Journal of Social Hygiene.

DR. BENJAMIN C. GRUENBERG

Author of "Parents and Sex Education" and "The Biology of Human Life."

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*Wednesday, January 27, at 3:45 P. M.—
Afternoon Lecture*

Nerves and Behavior

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THE ADOLESCENT IN THE FAMILY

(Continued from page 6)

At this time, the boy being now nineteen years old, the father perceived that the situation was becoming dangerous and called for advice. The mental examination showed that this boy was of excellent quality intellectually and fully capable of pursuing a college course, rating well above the average college senior in this respect. Intellectual incapacity was thus ruled out as the cause of his trouble. The family history as to achievement was good. No man among near relatives had failed to function occupationally on the family level, which was in the professions.

When the relationships between the parents and the boy were examined, it was revealed that the mother had always coddled him from infancy, had encouraged him to remain in bed at the slightest illness, had read to him for years instead of requiring him to read for himself, and had clung emotionally to him throughout his life. At the age of nineteen years, she had not broken off the habit of tucking him in at night.

"So-and-so is mother's beau," she would say. "He doesn't care for the other girls." In every respect, childish attitudes had been encouraged by the mother to persist. As a result we had before us a typical "mamma's boy" aged nineteen years. For instance, during the interviews held with him, he ate gumdrops like a child and naively offered some to the examiner. Even the gumdrop habit had not been broken. Never had he earned a cent in his life. "Mamma always gave me my allowance," he said. He did not care for girls. He was afraid of them and disliked parties. He had developed a variety of doubts and anxieties concerning his powers and his physical health.

It was recommended that the boy get work (with emphasis on work) at some distance from home, earning money, preferably at some form of manual labor, to dissipate the fears about his heart, stomach, and practically every other vital organ that a person may have, and that he then be sent West to a coeducational college to complete his college work.

These suggestions were received with deep offense by the mother, but the father had all the recommendations carried out. This homesickness was gradually cured, in spite of the unfavorable circumstance that his case had been allowed to go on in this way for nearly twenty years.

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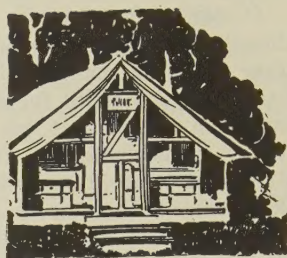
We have shown that getting away from the family is likely to involve a conflict between *old habits* and *new urges*. What are these new urges and how do they arise? They arise as functions of the maturing organism, chiefly as concerns the intellect, and as concerns sexual powers and interests. They have to do with the life plans of the individual in regard to mating, vocation, religious belief, and the general concept of the self. These urges cannot become strong until sex and intellect approach maturity, which is during adolescence. They grow, as organs grow, especially the brain with its appendages and the sexual organs. It is to carry out plans built upon these urges that the adolescent struggles for his freedom, against the pull of his own habits and those of his parents.

The adolescent should be sympathetically encouraged to make a life plan, but in the knowledge that this may shift somewhat as years advance and in the thought that it should be sufficiently flexible to adjust to inevitable obstacles and conditions which cannot be foreseen. Above all, it is important that no impossible ideal of the self be fostered. Disharmony between an impossible ideal of the self and the actual potentialities of the person may lead to painful mental conflicts and to break-down. In furthering the psychological weaning of their offspring, parents should strive to estimate objectively the real capacities of the latter, to avoid fostering impossible ideals.

In order to foresee and guard against an unintentional clutching at their adolescent children in an effort to prevent their normal departure, parents should begin early to cultivate interests extraneous to their children. Such interests will serve to occupy and balance them against the day of their children's psychological weaning. The adolescent should neither be thrust forth suddenly from home nor be held in bondage to the home. The weaning should be gradual but complete. This achievement calls for patience and for insight on the part of parents, under the complicated conditions of our advanced civilization.

The Findings of the Conference

"Concerning Parents" will be the title of the book which is to contain the lectures delivered at the Conference on Parenthood held by the Child Study Association October 26-28, 1925. The date of publication will be announced. Dr. Ernest R. Groves writes that he is planning to use the book as a text in two of his classes.



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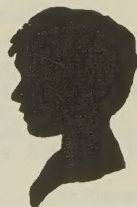
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